

### Abstract of the Disclosure

In a data packet router, a method for redirecting packets destined for a port comprises steps of monitoring port status on a continuing or periodic basis, updating a port-status table, listing port status as active or failed and an alternative destination for each port, checking the table by circuitry along a packet route for a packet en route, and sending the received packet to the predestined port if the port is listed in the table as active, and sending the received packet to the alternative destination if the port is listed in the table as failed. The method can be implemented essentially anywhere along a routing path where circuitry may support a table look-up and re-tagging packets for alternative destinations. In one embodiment the automatic protection switching is performed in a fabric card, and in another on a line card.

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